

COUNCIL POLICY**CURRENT**

SUBJECT: STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF
RECOGNIZED COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEES
POLICY NO.: 600-24
EFFECTIVE DATE: July 30, 1990

BACKGROUND:

Community planning committees in San Diego have been formed and recognized by the City Council to advise the City Council, Planning Commission, Planning Department, the City Manager and other governmental agencies in the preparation, adoption of, implementation of or amendment to the general or community plan as it pertains to the area of concern of each committee.

PURPOSE:

To establish minimum standard operating procedures and responsibilities to govern the conduct of business of each community planning committee that is officially recognized by The City of San Diego to participate in the preparation and implementation of community plans as defined in Council Policy 600-05.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the City Council to require each community planning committee, as a condition of official recognition by The City of San Diego, to submit a copy of its own operating procedures and responsibilities, otherwise known as "bylaws", to the offices of the City Clerk and the Planning Department. These bylaws must follow the format of the following standard operating procedures and responsibilities and be in conformance with the criteria contained herein. The original bylaws for each community planning committee and the initial members and terms of each community planning committee shall be approved by resolution of the City Council.

Subsequent amendments may be approved by the Planning Director and City Attorney if they are determined to be in conformance with the Council Policy. Bylaws that cannot be approved by the Planning Director and City Attorney shall be taken to the Rules Committee. Failure of a community planning committee to comply with the approved operating procedures and responsibilities shall be cause for the City Council to withdraw committee recognition. The remainder of this policy provides a general format for revision or establishment of committee by-laws.

ARTICLE I Name

- Section 1. The community planning committee shall adopt an official name which shall be subject to the approval of the City Council.
- Section 2. All committee activities shall be conducted in its official name.
- Section 3. The community planning area boundaries which are applicable to each committee shall; be shown on a map to be included in the bylaws as Exhibit "A".

- Section 4. The official positions and opinions of the committee shall not be established or determined by any organization other than the committee.

ARTICLE II Purpose of Community Planning Committee and General Provisions

- Section 1. The primary purpose of the community planning committee shall be to advise the City Council, Planning Commission and other governmental agencies as may be appropriate in the initial preparation, adoption of, implementation of or amendment to the General or Community Plan as it pertains to the area or areas of concern to said committee (hereafter referred to as the planning process).

The community planning committee reviewing individual development projects should focus such review on conformity with the adopted Community Plan and/or the General Plan. Whenever possible, all review shall be completed, and written comments submitted to the City, during the public review period offered by the environmental review process (substantive changes in projects subsequent to completion of the environmental review process will sanction further evaluation by the Community Planning committees). This will provide staff and the project proponent the opportunity to respond to the comments or concerns and potentially resolve possible conflicts before the project is noticed for discretionary action.

- Section 2. Insofar as the efforts of the committee are engaged in the diligent pursuit of the above purpose, professional planning staff assistance, if any, shall be provided from the Planning Department, and/or as appropriate by staff under the direction of the City Manager.
- Section 3. Insofar as the efforts of the committee are engaged in the diligent pursuit of nonplanning oriented implementation activities, professional staff assistance, if any shall be provided by the City Manager from appropriate managerial departments.
- Section 4. All committee activities shall be nonpartisan and nonsectarian and shall not discriminate against any person or persons by reason of race, color, sex, creed or national origin, or sexual orientation, or physical handicap, nor shall the committee take part, officially or unofficially, or lend its influence in, the election of any candidate for political office. Planning committee members shall not identify affiliation with a community planning committee when endorsing political candidates or ballot measures.
- Section 5. Pursuant to the provisions of City Council Policy 600-05, failure of the committee to diligently pursue the initial preparation, adoption, implementation or amendments to the planning process shall result in the forfeiture of rights to represent its community for these purposes. Such a determination resulting in the forfeiture of rights to represent its community for these purposes shall be made only by the City Council upon the recommendation of the Planning Department.

ARTICLE III Community Planning Committee Organizations

- Section 1. The community planning committee shall consist of not less than 12 members nor more than 20 members, provided, however, that when a larger membership shall give better representation to a community, the City Council may approve such larger membership. Upon recognition by the City Council, the members of the community planning committees shall constitute the official committee for the purposes set forth in Article II.
- Section 2. The members of this committee shall consist of the members as of the date of recognition by the City Council, and of such additional members as shall thereafter be elected by eligible community members in the manner prescribed by these Operating Procedures and Responsibilities.
- Section 3. Community planning committee members shall be elected by and from eligible members of the community. To be an eligible community member, an individual must be at least eighteen (18) years of age, and shall be affiliated with the community as a property owner or resident or local business person with a business address in the community at which employees or operators of the business are located. Eligibility may be further defined in committee bylaws. Community planning committee members shall to the extent possible, be representative of the various geographic sections of the community and diversified community interests.
- Section 4. Except for the purpose of the selection of initial committee members, members of the committee shall be elected to serve for fixed terms of two to four years with expiration dates during alternate years to provide continuity. No person may serve on a committee for more than eight consecutive years if the committee members are elected to two- or four-year terms, or nine consecutive years if members are elected to three-year terms, commencing from 1976, the original date of adoption of this Council Policy.

After a one-year break in service as a committee member, an individual who had served for eight or nine consecutive years shall again be eligible for election to the committee.

Exceptions:

- 1) Any member who has served in excess of eight or nine consecutive years (as specified above in this section) upon adoption of the 1989 amendment to this policy may continue in that position until the next committee election; and
- 2) A committee member may serve in excess of eight or nine consecutive years (as specified above in this section) if that person is reelected to a new term provided that they receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by eligible community members participating in a regular election. The number of individuals on a planning committee serving more than eight or nine consecutive years shall in no case exceed twenty-five percent of the voting committee membership. No individual may serve as an officer for more than eight or nine consecutive years as specified in Article VII, Section 1.

ARTICLE IV Vacancies

- Section 1. The committee shall find a vacancy exists upon receipt of a resignation in writing from one of its members or upon receipt of a written report from its secretary reporting the third consecutive unexcused absence of a member(s) from regular meeting as established under Article VI, Section 2 below. The committee shall establish a written policy to define basis for an excused absence, and may establish a written policy that reduces the number of unexcused absences used to determine a vacancy.
- Section 2. Vacancies that may occur on the committee shall be filled by the committee in a manner specified by the bylaws of the committee not later than 120 days, following the date of the determination of the vacancy. The term of office of any member filling a vacancy in accordance with the procedure established in Article III, Section 4 above shall be for the balance of the vacated term.
- Section 3. When a planning committee is unable to fill a vacancy within the 120 days, as specified above, and the committee has more than twelve members, the committee shall either amend its bylaws to permit decreased membership to a minimum of twelve members, or report in writing the actions taken in filling vacancies to and request assistance from the City Council. If a vacancy remains for more than 120 days from the time a vacancy is declared, and the committee has less than twelve members in good standing, the Planning Department shall request that the City Council place the community planning committee on inactive status until the committee has at least twelve members in good standing.

ARTICLE V Elections

- Section 1. Elections of community planning committee members shall be held annually during a regularly scheduled meeting in March. Community planning groups shall hold elections every year or every other year.
- Section 2. It shall be the duty of the Planning Department to annually purchase two advertisements for publication in a newspaper of broad City-wide distribution. The advertisements will describe the general function of the community planning committees, and will list the names of individual groups, their meeting times and locations, the date of the next election, and a Planning Department contact for each community.
- It shall be the duty of the community planning committee to make a good faith effort to contact community newspapers and utilize other means appropriate to their communities to advertise the elections.
- Section 3. Voting shall be by secret written ballot. At a minimum, ballots shall be available at the noticed planning committee meeting at which the election will be held.

ARTICLE VI Community Planning Committee Duties

- Section 1. It shall be the duty of the planning committee to cooperatively work with the Planning Department and as appropriate, the City Manager, throughout the planning process, including but not limited to the formation of long-range community goals, objectives and proposals or the revision thereto for inclusion in a General or Community Plan.
- Section 2. It shall be the duty of each committee member to attend all committee meetings. Regular meetings shall be periodically held by the planning committee to meet with the Planning Department at a mutually agreed upon time and location during appropriate periods in the planning process. A quorum, defined as a majority of non-vacant seats of the planning committee, must be present in order to conduct business and/or to vote on projects or actions at regular committee meetings. A report of attendance and a copy of committee approved minutes which include the votes taken on each matter acted upon for each meeting shall be available for public distribution and shall be submitted to the Planning Department within 14 days upon approval by the Committee. Planning group resolutions on specific projects should indicate whether or not a quorum was present, whether or not the applicant appeared before the planning group, and when and what type of notification the applicant received requesting his/her appearance at the planning group meeting. The Planning Committee may hold meetings other than regular meetings in accordance with a policy established by the committee except that executive sessions shall be prohibited. All meetings of committees and subcommittees shall be open to the public and shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order except as otherwise provided in this Council Policy and/or committee bylaws.
- Section 3. It shall be the duty of the committee to periodically seek community-wide understanding of and participation in the planning and implementation process as specified in Article II, Section 1. The committee shall give due consideration to all responsible community attitudes insofar as these are deemed to be in the best long-range interest of the community at large. It shall also be the duty of the committee, when reviewing development projects, to allow participation of affected property owners, residents and business establishments with proximity to the proposed development. The committee shall inform the project applicant or representative each time that such review will take place and provide the applicant with an opportunity to present the project. Any interested member of the public shall be given an opportunity to comment on projects during planning committee meetings.
- Section 4. It shall be the duty of the committee to maintain a current, up-to-date roster of the names of committee members to be kept on file in the offices of the City Clerk and the Planning Department and to submit to the offices of the City Clerk and the Planning Department by February 15 of each year an annual report of accomplishments for the past calendar year and anticipated objectives for the coming year related to Article II, Section 1 above.

- Section 5. It shall be the permissive duty of the committee to develop a policy for financial contributions from the citizens of the community for the purposes of furthering the efforts of the committee to promote understanding and participation in the planning process. However, no membership dues shall be required.
- Section 6. It shall be the duty of each planning committee member to attend an orientation training session administered by the Planning Department. It shall be the duty of the Planning Department to offer at least two orientation, and two advanced training courses each year.
- Section 7. Any member of a community planning group with a direct economic interest in any project that comes before the group must disclose to the community planning group that economic interest, and must refrain from voting or participating in any manner as a member of the planning group.

ARTICLE VII Planning Committee Officers

- Section 1. The officers of the committee shall be elected from and by the members of the committee. Said officers shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary and by policy may include such other officers as the committee may deem necessary. The planning committee shall determine the length of an officer's term in its bylaws, except that no person may serve as an officer for more than eight or nine consecutive years. After a period of one year in which that person did not serve as an officer that person shall again be eligible to serve as an officer.
- Section 2. Chairperson. The Chairperson shall be the principal officer of the committee and shall preside over all committee and community-wide meetings.
- Section 3. Vice Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall perform all the duties and responsibilities of the principal officer.
- Section 4. Secretary. The Secretary shall prepare all correspondence and record and maintain minutes of the actions of the committee meetings and provide said information to the committee and general public as required. The Secretary shall maintain an attendance record and provide a report of same at each committee meeting pursuant to Article IV, Section 2 above.
- Section 5. The Chairperson shall be the committee's representative to the Community Planning Committee ("CPC"). However, by specific action, some other member may be selected as the official representative to CPC with the same voting rights and privileges as the Chairperson. Each community planning committee may select an alternate CPC representative.

ARTICLE VIII Planning Committee Policies

- Section 1. In addition to incorporating into group bylaws the policies outlined above, the committee shall establish written policies in their bylaws to govern the following topics:
- (1) Procedure for election of committee members to include the following:
 - (a) Requirements for planning committee candidacy.
 - (b) Requirements for membership and voting eligibility clearly defined, including membership application or registration if desired.
 - (c) Method of review of voter qualification.
 - (d) Method of cross-checking voting eligibility at time of election.
 - (2) Procedure for conducting committee business and noticing regular meetings.
 - (3) Procedure for calling a special meeting ensuring that special meetings are adequately noticed and held within the community at a time and place where members and the public may attend.
 - (4) Procedure for establishing and selecting committee officers.
 - (5) Definition of “excused absence”.
 - (6) Procedure for ensuring that committee meeting agendas are open to input from all committee members and the public.
 - (7) Procedure for ensuring the opportunity for public testimony and fair and reasonable debate.
 - (8) Such other topics as may be required by the Planning Department.
- Section 2. Community planning group bylaws shall be amended to conform with the 1989 amendment to this policy within twenty-four months from the enactment of this amendment. Until the expiration of twenty-four months, or adoption of bylaws amendments, whichever comes first, a community planning group operating in conformance with bylaws that were previously approved by the City Council, shall be deemed to be operating in conformance with this policy.

CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
COUNCIL POLICY

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HISTORY:

Adopted by Resolution R-216888 09/29/1976
Amended by Resolution R-257382 10/25/1982
Amended by Resolution R-273369 05/02/1989
Amended by Resolution R-276245 07/30/1990